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Research Report

Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc. 485 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

THE READERSHIP OF NEWSPAPER PAGES AND SECTIONS: DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWNS

February, 1982

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

This study is one of a series of marketing research reports prepared by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc., as a service to the newspaper industry and its advertisers. These reports form the basis of recommendations for the efficient use of the newspaper medium to meet the specific marketing needs of individual companies.

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TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES
OR SECTIONS GENERALLY READ, BY:

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

All measures of media exposure should be operationally defined, because the level of exposure obtained will vary with the method of measurement, whether the medium in question is print or broadcast.

The figures presented in this report are from the 1981 Simmons Study of Media and Markets. They were obtained in personal interviews with a multi-stage area probability sample of more than 15,000 adults. Initially, respondents were asked whether they generally read or look at every page of the daily newspaper, or whether they read only certain types of pages and sections. Those who indicated that they read only certain types of pages were shown a list of ten kinds of content found in most daily newspapers and asked which of these they read.

Perhaps the most important datum from this research is the finding that more than six out of ten daily newspaper readers (62%) report that they usually see every page of the newspaper they read. This does not mean that they "read" every item in the newspaper. However, since the human eye is a very efficient scanning device, these readers have the opportunity to be exposed to any editorial or advertising content appearing in the issue. Actual readership depends on the perceived interest or importance of the item.

For the minority who were directly questioned about specific types of content, the figures obtained are probably closer to "true" readership figures. In effect, these respondents are indicating that they usually seek out the content in question.

Findings from a 1971 study conducted by Audits & Surveys, Inc. in which respondents were taken through sample pages of newspapers they had read, suggest that the figures in the current report are roughly equivalent to "page opening." The principal difference is that page opening figures tend to be somewhat more stable across content categories (84% for the average page). This may mean that more selective readers who are looking for particular kinds of content are "accidentally" exposed to other pages as well, since individual pages may include several types of content.

Within any given demographic segment the figures shown in these tables may reasonably be assumed to show the relative level of interest in a particular kind of content. However, any differences found between demographic segments should be interpreted with caution, since these are affected by the percentages who report reading or looking at every page.[1] For example, the table on readership for total adults, by age, might suggest that adults 55 to 64 years of age are just as interested in "entertainment" content as those who are 18 to 24. This is only because more

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[1] In each case, the percentage shown for a given type of page or section includes the percentage who say they read "every page."

older readers report reading "every page". Other research addressed more specifically to this point indicates that adults in the youngest age group are more likely to read "entertainment" material.[2]

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[2] For example, see "The Sunday Newspaper: A Five-Market Study" (Newspaper Advertising Bureau, August, 1980).

Table 1

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS USUALLY READ
(Adults, by Sex)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Adults	Males	Females
Usually read every page	62%	61%	62%
Read certain pages or sections	38	39	38
Business, finance	77	78	75
Classified	77	76	77
Comics	77	77	76
Editorial	80	77	81
Enteftainment	82	78	85
Food, cooking	79	70	86
General news	94	93	95
Home furnishings, improvement	77	71	82
Sports	81	88	74
TV, radio listings	79	75	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(107,944)	(51,703)	(56,242)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 2

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Adults, by Age)

	Percent of Weekday Audience					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
Usually read every page	50%	61%	61%	66%	63%	68%
Read certain pages or sections	50	39	39	34	37	32
Business, finance	66	75	75	81	80	80
Classified	71	79	76	79	76	76
Comics	70	76	75	80	79	80
Editorial	67	77	79	84	85	84
Entertainment	78	84	82	83	82	81
Food, cooking	65	78	79	80	83	84
General news	89	93	94	97	95	96
Home furnishings, improvement	63	77	78	80	80	81
Sports	77	80	81	83	81	82
TV, radio listings	71	77	77	81	81	83
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(16,758)	(23,036)	(18,134)	(17,043)	(16,164)	(16,808)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 3

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Males, by Age)

	Percent of Weekday Audience					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
Usually read every page	48%	60%	63%	67%	64%	68%
Read certain pages or sections	52	40	37	33	36	32
Business, finance	68	76	80	83	83	84
Classified	72	77	78	80	75	76
Comics	70	75	76	82	80	81
Editorial	63	75	78	83	83	85
Entertainment	73	80	80	79	80	79
Food, cooking	57	69	73	74	76	76
General news	88	92	93	97	96	96
Home furnishings, improvement	56	70	74	75	76	76
Sports	85	88	90	90	88	88
TV, radio listings	65	75	74	79	80	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,747)	(11,211)	(8,626)	(8,257)	(7,630)	(7,232)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 4

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Females, by Age)

	Percent of Weekday Audience					
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 +
Usually read every page	53%	61%	61%	65%	63%	69%
Read certain pages or sections	47	39	39	35	37	31
Business, finance	66	73	73	79	78	78
Classified	72	79	76	79	78	78
Comics	70	76	75	78	78	81
Editorial	71	78	82	84	87	84
Entertainment	85	87	85	87	86	83
Food, cooking	75	85	87	87	91	90
General news	90	93	96	96	96	97
Home furnishings, improvement	71	82	83	84	84	85
Sports	70	72	75	75	75	79
TV, radio listings	78	79	81	82	83	85
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,011)	(11,826)	(9,509)	(8,786)	(8,534)	(9,576)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 5

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Adults, by Education)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	College Graduate	1-3 yrs. College	High School Graduate	Some High School or Less
Usually read every page	61%	66%	61%	60%
Read certain pages or sections	39	34	39	40
Business, finance	82	80	75	72
Classified	77	80	77	74
Comics	78	80	76	74
Editorial	83	82	79	76
Entertainment	84	85	83	78
Food, cooking	77	79	79	78
General news	96	94	94	93
Home furnishings, improvement	78	78	76	75
Sports	82	84	80	79
TV, radio listings	77	80	78	79
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(19,432)	(18,983)	(42,018)	(27,512)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 6

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Males, by Education)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	College Graduate	1-3 yrs. College	High School Graduate	Some High School or Less
Usually read every page	61%	68%	60%	58%
Read certain pages or sections	39	32	40	42
Business, finance	85	84	75	73
Classified	77	81	76	73
Comics	79	81	76	75
Editorial	83	82	74	74
Entertainment	82	84	76	74
Food, cooking	72	73	68	69
General news	95	94	92	93
Home furnishings, improvement	74	74	68	69
Sports	87	90	88	86
TV, radio listings	75	79	74	74
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(11,164)	(9,486)	(17,870)	(13,183)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 7

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Females, by Education)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	College Graduate	1-3 yrs. College	High School Graduate	Some High School or Less
Usually read every page	62%	65%	62%	62%
Read certain pages or sections	38	35	38	38
Business, finance	79	78	75	71
Classified	78	80	77	75
Comics	79	79	77	74
Editorial	84	83	82	78
Entertainment	87	86	88	81
Food, cooking	85	85	87	87
General news	98	95	95	93
Home furnishings, improvement	83	82	83	81
Sports	75	77	74	73
TV, radio listings	80	82	81	83
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,268)	(9,497)	(24,148)	(14,328)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 8

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Adults, by Household Income)

	Percent of Weekday Audience				
	$35,000 & Over	$25,000-$34,999	$15,000-$24,999	$10,000-$14,999	Under $10,000
Usually read every page	59%	60%	64%	62%	63%
Read certain pages or sections	41	40	36	38	37
Business, finance	78	77	78	74	74
Classified	75	77	79	77	75
Comics	76	76	79	76	77
Editorial	79	79	81	79	78
Entertainment	81	83	84	81	80
Food, cooking	74	78	81	80	80
General news	94	94	95	94	93
Home furnishings, improvement	74	76	79	77	76
Sports	81	80	82	79	81
TV, radio listings	75	77	80	79	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(21,954)	(23,283)	(27,186)	(20,047)	(15,475)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 9

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS USUALLY READ

(Males, by Household Income)

	Percent of Weekday Audience				
	$35,000 & Over	$25,000-$34,999	$15,000-$24,999	$10,000-$14,999	Under $10,000
Usually read every page	60%	60%	62%	64%	60%
Read certain pages or sections	40	40	38	36	40
Business, finance	81	78	79	77	74
Classified	75	77	78	77	71
Comics	77	76	79	76	77
Editorial	77	78	78	78	75
Entertainment	77	79	81	75	76
Food, cooking	68	70	72	73	71
General news	94	94	94	93	91
Home furnishings, improvement	69	71	72	72	71
Sports	88	88	89	87	88
TV, radio listings	72	74	77	76	78
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(12,697)	(11,933)	(12,532)	(8,893)	(5,648)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 10

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Females, by Household Income)

	Percent of Weekday Audience				
	$35,000 & Over	$25,000-$34,999	$15,000-$24,999	$10,000-$14,999	Under $10,000
Usually read every page	58%	60%	66%	61%	65%
Read certain pages or sections	42	40	34	39	35
Business, finance	75	75	78	72	74
Classified	75	76	80	77	77
Comics	74	76	79	76	78
Editorial	81	81	83	80	80
Entertainment	87	87	87	86	82
Food, cooking	83	87	88	86	85
General news	96	94	96	94	94
Home furnishings, improvement	82	82	85	82	78
Sports	72	73	76	74	77
TV, radio listings	78	80	83	82	84
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(9,257)	(11,350)	(14,655)	(11,154)	(9,827)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 11

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS USUALLY READ
(Adults, by Employment Status)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Total Employed	Full Time	Part Time	Not Employed
Usually read every page	60%	61%	60%	64%
Read certain pages or sections	40	39	40	36
Business, finance	76	77	74	77
Classified	76	77	75	77
Comics	76	76	77	78
Editorial	78	79	79	81
Entertainment	81	82	84	83
Food, cooking	75	76	77	83
General news	93	94	94	95
Home furnishings, improvement	74	75	75	80
Sports	82	83	78	79
TV, radio listings	76	77	81	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(66,940)	(58,344)	(8,595)	(41,005)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 12

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Males, by Employment Status)

	Percent of Weekday Audience	
	Total Employed[1]	Not Employed
Usually read every page	60%	63%
Read certain pages or sections	40	37
Business, finance	77	79
Classified	76	74
Comics	76	79
Editorial	77	77
Entertainment	78	77
Food, cooking	69	73
General news	93	93
Home furnishings, improvement	70	72
Sports	88	85
TV, radio listings	74	77
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(38,358)	(13,345)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

[1] Figures for full-time and part-time employed have been excluded because of small part-time base.

Table 13

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Females, by Employment Status)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Total Employed	Full Time	Part Time	Not Employed
Usually read every page	61%	60%	62%	64%
Read certain pages or sections	39	40	38	36
Business, finance	74	74	74	76
Classified	77	76	79	77
Comics	76	75	77	78
Editorial	80	79	82	82
Entertainment	86	85	87	85
Food, cooking	84	84	84	88
General news	95	94	95	95
Home furnishings, improvement	81	80	81	83
Sports	74	73	74	75
TV, radio listings	80	79	83	83
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(28,582)	(22,368)	(6,214)	(27,660)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 14

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS
USUALLY READ
(Adults, by Occupation)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Professional, Manager	Clerical, Sales	Craftsman, Foreman	Other Employed
Usually read every page	63%	60%	59%	59%
Read certain pages or sections	37	40	41	41
Business, finance	82	75	73	72
Classified	78	76	78	76
Comics	79	76	74	74
Editorial	83	78	74	75
Entertainment	84	84	76	81
Food, cooking	77	79	67	75
General news	95	93	94	94
Home furnishings, improvement	77	77	68	73
Sports	84	77	89	82
TV, radio listings	77	77	72	79
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(22,449)	(16,517)	(8,480)	(19,494)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 15

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS USUALLY READ
(Males, by Occupation)

	Percent of Weekday Audience			
	Professional, Manager	Clerical, Sales	Craftsman, Foreman	Other Employed
Usually read every page	62%	61%	58%	60%
Read certain pages or sections	38	39	42	40
Business, finance	84	82	72	72
Classified	76	76	78	77
Comics	79	80	73	74
Editorial	82	79	74	74
Entertainment	81	81	74	79
Food, cooking	71	72	65	69
General news	95	92	93	93
Home furnishings, improvement	74	71	66	69
Sports	88	89	89	88
TV, radio listings	75	75	71	76
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(14,038)	(4,773)	(7,910)	(11,637)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981

Table 16

TYPES OF DAILY NEWSPAPER PAGES OR SECTIONS USUALLY READ
(Females, by Occupation)

	Percent of Weekday Audience		
	Professional, Manager	Clerical, Sales	Other Employed
Usually read every page	65%	60%	57%
Read certain pages or sections	35	40	43
Business, finance	79	73	71
Classified	80	76	75
Comics	80	74	73
Editorial	86	79	76
Entertainment	89	85	84
Food, cooking	87	82	84
General news	97	94	93
Home furnishings, improvement	84	80	79
Sports	76	73	72
TV, radio listings	81	79	81
Projected base: Average Weekday Audience (in 000's)	(8,411)	(11,744)	(8,428)

Source: Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1981